THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

MEDIÆVAL INDIA UNDER MOHAMMEDAN RULE

712–1764

BY

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had broken up as soon as his iron hand was stiffened in death. Timur's conquests were too recent, too hasty, to be organized into settled empire. They were like a vast conflagration driven before the wind, which destroys the herbage for a while, but when the flame has passed the earth grows green again. Even in the original home, the Oxus land, a single century saw the downfall of Timur's dynasty: the fire had only left some embers, which smouldered awhile, but, lacking the kindling and stirring of the great incendiary, finally died out. After that, the sole relic of Timur's vast dominions was the little kingdom which an exiled prince of his own brave blood set up among the crags and passes of the Afghan hills — whence came the great Moghuls[1] and the glories of Delhi and Agra.

It was among these embers of the great fire that Babar, in 1494, at the age of eleven, found himself suddenly king of the province of Farghana beside the Iaxartes, by right of inheritance in the sixth generation from Timur. No boy had ever to face

[1] 'Moghul' — more accurately Mughal — is the Arabic spelling of Mongol, and is specially applied to the emperors of India descended from Babar and sometimes called in Europe the Babarids. They were however of mixed race; Babar himself was a Turk on his father's side, though a Mongol on his mother's, and he abhorred the very name of Moghul. His descendants introduced a strong Rajput strain by their marriages with Hindu princesses. The term Moghul is also applied to the followers of the Moghul emperors, and came to mean any fair man from Central Asia or Afghanistan, as distinguished from the darker native Indians. The various foreign invaders, or governing Muslim class, Turks, Afghans, Pathans, and Moghuls eventually became so mixed that all were indifferently termed Moghuls.